REMARKS

Claims 1 and 2 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected. Claim 1 is herein amended. No new matter has been entered.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Kasai et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0000295, in view of Universal Moulded Fiber Glass, Corp., GB 1,044,031, and further in view of Watanabe et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,673,541.

Applicants herein amend claim 1 to clarify the invention. Thereafter, Applicants disagree with the rejection because not all of the claimed limitations are met by the cited reference.

Applicants note that claim 1 specifies that the method it describes is for molding a fiber reinforced plastic member with a *curvature* utilizing a core having a shape corresponding to the shape of the member with a *curvature* and disposed on a plane. Claim 1 further specifies that its method includes the limitation of "a step of feeding release films deformed in advance *to correspond to the curvature of the molded member* [*emphasis added*]. Claim 2 depends from claim 1, so it also describes this subject matter.

Kasai et al. is relied upon as the primary prior art reference, and Office Action indicates (page 3) that Kasai et al. does not teach a fiber reinforced plastic member with a curvature.

However, the Office Action appears inconsistent in that the Office Action explicitly states (page 2) that Kasai et al. teaches the claim step quoted above in Paragraph [0023], and this paragraph does not disclose a release film deformed in advance to correspond to the curvature of

a molded member. Thus, the rejection is improper, because it relies on Kasai et al. to teach a claim element in paragraph [0023], and this paragraph fails to provide such teaching.

Regarding the claim recitation that the method is for molding a fiber reinforced plastic member with a *curvature* utilizing a core having a shape corresponding to the shape of the member with a *curvature* and disposed on a plane, the rejection relies on Universal Moulded Fiber Glass, Corp. to provide a prior art teaching of a fiber reinforced element with a curvature. The Office Action then presents the conclusion that it would have been obvious to modify the method of Kasai et al. to mold an element with a curvature when such structure was required.

However, Applicants note that the Office Action only cites Universal Moulded Fiber Glass, Corp. to show a fiber reinforced element with a curvature, and the Office Action does not discuss the conditions requiring a curved structure. Even if the Office Action did explain how Universal Moulded Fiber Glass, Corp. does discuss a requirement for a curved structure, the Office Action also needs to provide a explanation of why the such would be a requirement with respect to the Kasai et al. disclosure. Because the Office Action does not provide such discussion or explanation, it has not properly explained why its hypothetical modification of the Kasai et al. technology would have been obvious. Thus, the rejection is unjustified for another reason.

Applicants submit that the rejection is flawed for another reason: although Universal Moulded Fiber Glass, Corp. provides a prior art teaching of a fiber reinforced element with a curvature, no teaching or suggestion is identified by the Examiner of deforming a release film to correspond to the curvature of a molded member *before feeding the release film*. In contrast,

Applicants submit that Universal Moulded Fiber Glass, Corp. teaches that curvature is imparted by pulling a solidified article at an angle. (Page 1, lines 76-82.) Fig. 10 shows that forming device FD is at the *exit* end of the disclosed apparatus, which strongly suggests that there is no advance deformation of a release film before it is fed as claimed. Given this teaching, Applicants note no valid justification to deem it obvious to provide a release film, which is deformed to a curvature "in advance" as claimed.

In addition to the above arguments traversing the rejection, Applicants herein amend claim 1 to clarify the invention, and submit that this amendment clarifies that the present invention is patentably distinct from the combination of cited references.

Applicants note that Kasai et al., which is by the present inventors, is a method for continuously forming a straight square pipe so there is no need to deform release film into a predetermined three-dimensional shape, unlikely the present invention.

An angle for winding the tape (col. 6 lines 62-65) in Watanabe et al. differs from the angle of meandering of the fiber in the longitudinal direction of the present invention.

Applicants herein clarify the claims of the present invention, and then traverse the cited rejections because none of the cited references, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of the claimed invention, namely

said plural sheets of semi-cured prepreg material are fed to be sandwiched between said release films; and

the hot-pressing step is performed while pullers disposed before and after the hot-pressing step for gripping the laminated body and introducing the same into the hot press,

wherein the hot-pressing is performed while preventing tension from being placed on the fiber in the prepreg.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicants submit that that the claims, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicants request such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

If this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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